

The Morehead City Planning Board conducted a work session on Tuesday, October 18, 2011, in the Municipal Building Auditorium, 202 South Eighth Street, Morehead City, NC, at 5:30 p.m. The following people were present:

MEMBERS: Chairman Bill Taylor, John Creech, Curtis Fleshman, Corinne Geer, Jackie Maucher, and Gordon Thayer

ABSENT: Gordy Patrick

Others present: Planning Director Linda Staab, Planner Sandi Watkins, Mark Hibbs of the Carteret County News-Times, Commissioner Demus Thompson, D.J. Femia-Leeuwenburg, and Ken Wood.

The purpose of the work session was to review the permissible and special uses in the Unoffensive Industry (IU) and Port-Industrial (IP) districts concurrently, as well as to examine industrial districts in other port and waterfront municipal jurisdictions.

Planner Staab noted that the IU district consists of a smaller area than the IP district, with only fifty-nine (59) acres in IU as compared to the seven hundred and sixteen (716) acres in the IP district. Ms. Staab referenced maps in the agenda materials provided to the Board, and explained that there are clusters of IU in the following areas: 1) four parcels in the 1500-1600 block of Bridges and Fisher Street; 2) ten parcels in the railroad wye vicinity; 3) three parcels in the 3800 block of Bridges Street including the new water treatment plant; 4) one parcel on North 20th Street; 5) four parcels on Friendly Road; 6) two parcels on Banks Street near Carteret Community College; 7) the Longley Supply property on Bridges Street; and 8) Bally Refrigeration on Little Nine Road.

In response to a request made during the October 4, 2011, work session, staff provided information on the ownership and operation of specific ports authorities. The port in Charleston, South Carolina is operated by the South Carolina State Ports Authority; the port in Miami, Florida is operated by Miami-Dade County; the port in Norfolk, Virginia is operated by the Virginia Port Authority on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia; the port in Pensacola, Florida is operated by the City of Pensacola; the port in Savannah Georgia is operated by the Georgia Ports Authority; the port in Seattle, Washington is operated by King County; and the port in Wilmington, North Carolina is operated by the North Carolina State Ports Authority.

Concerning a summary on various port and waterfront community ordinances, Gordon Thayer stated that the industrial districts in some other communities appeared to be “catchables”, as they included all types of uses, from industrial to residential and commercial. In response to Jackie Maucher’s question, Planner Staab said that, to degrees allowed by enabling statutes, classifications of uses may overlap within zoning ordinances in North Carolina.

Chairman Taylor said that the description of the industrial classifications contained in Article 9-13 of the Unified Development Ordinance should be adjusted to address concerns associated with the phrase, “or other objectionable characteristics which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods”. He also said that he hoped to avoid defining large quantities of uses as seen in some of the ordinances reviewed (e.g. Charleston, SC).

Planner Staab offered performance standards as a possible additional means of regulating industrial districts. She provided a copy of Wake County’s operational performance standards, which included compliance requirements for noise, odor, glare, heat, lighting, vibration, airborne emissions (i.e., smoke, particulate matter, steam, and gases), toxic matter, fire and explosion, radiation, radioactivity, and waste. If adopted, equipment would need to be purchased and staff trained in order to enforce such standards. Board members discussed whether the benefit would be substantial considering the state and federal government currently have regulations

which address the majority of these issues. Planner Staab said that it would create another “layer” if an issue were to arise. Gordon Thayer suggested that Staff maintain the background information on performance standards for possible future use, but not adopt and implement the standards at this time.

Board members continued a discussion began during the October 4, 2011, work session on the possibility of establishing a Port “P” district and an Industrial “I” district. Gordon Thayer suggested the “I” district could encompass the western portion of town, and the “P” district could incorporate the port area.

Chairman Taylor asked if the IU districts would be maintained given the fact that two new districts were being proposed and the Port-Industrial district was proposed for elimination. He noted that some of the parcels which are currently zoned IU could be rezoned to a non-industrial district, such as Highway Commercial (CH) or Office and Professional (OP). Planner Staab explained that if the IU district were to be eliminated, the first step would be to establish what uses are occurring in the IU district presently, and to determine in which districts those uses would be most compatible.

Board members discussed the port tour which had occurred earlier that day. Corinne Geer said that the tour was enlightening, and Chairman Taylor said that it was very impressive.

D.J. Femia-Leeuwenburg, representative of the Morehead City Ports Committee, said this was the first group to tour the port, but the Committee hopes to schedule more tours in the future.

Chairman Taylor scheduled the next Planning Board Work Session for Tuesday, November 15, 2011, to be held during the regular Planning Board meeting. The purpose of the next meeting is to review the proposed “Port” and “Industrial” districts with associated definitions and uses, and to evaluate new zoning classification possibilities for properties which are currently zoned IU.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Sandi Watkins, Planner